SFY 2020-21 Youth Support Services Opportunity Grant

Legislative Report

4/26/2022

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
Employment and Training Programs Division

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[mn.gov/deed](https://mn.gov/deed/%22%20%5Co%20%22DEED%20website)

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## Background

The Minnesota Legislature appropriated $1,000,000 each year in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2020 and 2021 for a competitive grant program to provide grants to organizations that provide support services for individuals. Grants must focus on individuals from low-income communities and/or young adults (ages 14-24) from families with a history of intergenerational poverty, and/or communities of color. ([Minnesota Session Laws - 2019, 1st Special Session, Chapter 7 – H.F. No. 2, Article 1, Sec. 2 Subd. 3(bb)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2019/1/Session%2BLaw/Chapter/7/)) The Legislature permits the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to retain four percent of these funds for administration and monitoring, making the total amount available for grants equal to $960,000 per year.

### Grant Requirements

Eligible applicants were state or local government units, tribal governments, nonprofit organizations, community action agencies, business organizations or associations, and/or labor organizations. The maximum amount of funding that could be requested by any single applicant was $100,000 per year.

Services provided under this proposal must serve individuals from the eligible populations in one or more of the following areas:

* Job training,
* Employment preparation,
* Internships,
* Job assistance to parents,
* Financial literacy,
* Academic and behavioral interventions for low-performing students, and/or
* Youth intervention activities

### Overview of the Request for Proposals Process

DEED developed a Request For Proposals (RFP) for Support Services Opportunity Grant funds. This RFP was posted on DEED’s website on June 5, 2019 under [Grant and Contract Opportunities](https://mn.gov/deed/about/contracts/). Applications were due by 11:59 p.m. on July 12, 2019.

The DEED Communications team notified individuals, organizations, the Governor’s Workforce Development Board, Councils of Color, and an extensive list of interested parties regarding the release of the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Support Services Competitive Grant. The Youth Development team shared the Support Services RFP with the Shared Vision for Youth interagency workgroup and their networks. Also, pursuant to State law, the State Register included information about RFPs available through DEED including the Support Services Opportunity Grant.

The RFP directed potential applicants to submit all questions on the RFP in writing via e-mail to a specified DEED contact. All questions submitted in writing were answered on a weekly basis and published on DEED’s [Grant and Contract Opportunities](https://mn.gov/deed/about/contracts/) website. DEED’s Office of Youth Development hosted an Informational Webinar about the Support Services funding opportunity on Monday, June 17, 2019. A link to the recorded webinar was available on demand on DEED’s [Grant and Contract Opportunities](https://mn.gov/deed/about/contracts/) webpage.

## Grantees

Forty-two (42) proposals, that served youth, were submitted to DEED in this funding cycle. These proposals totaled nearly four million in funding requests for SFY 2020; approximately 80% of the total requested funding. In the SFY 2020 funding cycle, $742,200 was awarded to 17 Youth Support Services grants.

Of the submitted Youth Support Services proposals, 62% percent were metro focused and 38% were Greater Minnesota or statewide focused. Approximately 54% of available Youth Support Services funds were allocated to the Twin Cities metro area and 46% allocated to Greater Minnesota. All proposals were read and scored by community and state reviewers. The following organizations were recommended for Youth Support Services funding.

| **Organization** | **Area Served** | **SFY 2020 Grant Award** | **SFY 2021 Grant Award** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Minnesota Valley Action Council | South Central Minnesota | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| City of Brooklyn Park - BrookLynk | Cities of Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| Career Solutions | Stearns and Benton Counties | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities | Ramsey and Washington Counties | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| Project Legacy | Rochester and surrounding communities in Southeast Minnesota | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| Workforce Development Inc | 10 counties in Southeastern Minnesota | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| Model Cities of St. Paul, Inc | Ramsey and Dakota Counties | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| Merrick Community Services | Eastside of Saint Paul | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council | Southwest Minnesota | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| Jeremiah Program | Twin Cities | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| African Immigrants Community Services | Twin Cities | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| Karen Organization of Minnesota | Ramsey County | $45,000 | $45,000 |
| Banyan Community | Minneapolis | $42,200 | $42,200 |
| Greater Bemidji | Northwest Minnesota | $40,000 | $40,000 |
| Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency  | Northeastern Minnesota | $40,000 | $40,000 |
| Goodwill-Easter Seals | Twin Cities | $40,000 | $40,000 |
| Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services | 11 counties in Central Minnesota | $40,000 | $40,000 |
|  |  **Total:** | **$742,200** | **$742,200** |

### Project Descriptions

**Minnesota Valley Action Council/SC WorkForce Council - Partnership for SNAP E&T Success, $45,000**

This project provides intensive services for SNAP Employment & Training to low-income individuals from communities of color and youth, especially young adults from families with a history of intergenerational poverty. The program focuses on employment preparation and retention, providing participants in-depth assessment, counseling, and wrap-around supports necessary to remain engaged and to retain employment that leads to self-sustaining wages.

*Website: workforcecouncil.org*

*Local contacts: Heather Gleason, 507-345-2418, hgleason@workforcecouncil.org*

**City of Brooklyn Park - BrookLynk Youth Employment Program, $45,000**

The BrookLynk program consists of 21st-Century skill-building, experiential employment opportunities, and local coordination of employer partnerships. BrookLynk facilitates training and paid employment opportunities where youth ages 14 to 21 learn essential job skills such as interviewing, networking, and professionalism. BrookLynk aims to connect young people facing barriers to employment with the skills, experiences, and professional social networks needed to develop their pathway to college and career.

*Website: brooklynk.works*

*Local Contact: Catrice O’Neal, 763-493-8029,* *catrice.oneal@brooklynk.works*

**Career Solutions - CareerONE, $45,000**

CareerONE is a unique summer youth employability skills training opportunity which provides youth ages 14–24 identified as at risk with a realistic and positive work readiness training experience in a safe, nurturing and learning-rich environment; and prevents participants from regressing academically during the summer months. Youth participate in a variety of classroom and community activities including Contextual Academic Enrichment, Career Exploration, Work Readiness Skills, Workplace Safety, Financial Literacy Program. CareerONE also includes specific tracks: Construction/Manufacturing, Business Services, and Healthcare with college credit available for these tracks.

*Website: careersolutionsjobs.org*

*Local Contact: Tammy Biery, 320-308-5702,* *Tammy.biery@csjobs.org*

**YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities -** **YMCA Neighborhood Centers Workforce Development, $45,000**

This program provides job training, professional development, and a 100-hour paid supervised internship with support from a job coach for youth to be successful in embarking on first steps toward their career path. Additionally, life skills, financial literacy, skill building and mentoring opportunities and workshops are offered in order to empower adults within the community.  Participants residents of affordable housing communities that are facing significant economic barriers. The goal is for participants to transition to success in their career paths and/or personal goals. Our hope is that families can build the capacity for higher earning and long-term growth potential, leading to an opportunity to lift their families out of the poverty cycle.

*Website: ymcamn.org*

*Local contact: Katie Lowe, 651-259-1460,* *katie.lowe@ymcamn.org*

**Project Legacy - Vibrant Futures for Youth of Color, $45,000**

Serving youth and young adults of color experiencing poverty and those exiting the commercial sex industry, Project Legacy provides wrap around services including case management, employment services, education, mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence services, and legal services. Through these services the program confronts the immediate needs of participants, such as employment and housing, while simultaneously addressing underlying issues and mentoring youth through the pursuit of higher education or vocational training.

*Website: projectlegacymn.org*

*Local contact: Karen Edmonds, 507-254-3387,* *kedmonds@projectlegacymn.org*

**Workforce Development Inc - Emerging Leaders, $45,000**

The Emerging Leaders program focuses on serving youth who are 14 to 24 and from historically underserved populations; including youth of color, youth with disabilities, and those experiencing multigenerational poverty. Services provided include building relationships and rapport, while providing experiential and hands-on learning in areas such as job training, employment preparation, and engaging in career pathways education and work experience. The program is designed to help participants achieve success by providing them with a blueprint, essential supports, and opportunities to successfully transition to adulthood.

*Website: workforcedevelopmentinc.org*

*Local contact: Angela Birrittella, 507-251-2700,* ABIRRITTELLA@wdimn.org

**Model Cities of St. Paul, Inc - Community Coaching Employment Readiness, $45,000**

Community Coaching is an alternative intervention to detention for youth who are at high risk for incarceration. Through this program, Model Cities provides experiential learning opportunities in both workforce development and financial education for youth ages 14 - 19 who are on probation. Community Coaches support and link youth to services and pro­social activities that help them build positive relationships and connections. The main goal of this program is to enhance employability, increase access to employment among juvenile offenders, and foster strong financial decision-making.

*Website: www.modelcities.org*

*Local contact: Kizzy Downie, 651-632-8343,* *kdownie@modelcities.org*

**Merrick Community Services - Partnership with xChange, $45,000**

This project provides comprehensive services for Employment & Training to East Side Saint Paul residents with employment service needs, especially low-income individuals from communities of color with a history of intergenerational poverty. The program focuses on expanding and strengthening the client flow to Merrick Community Services job counselors and employment resources among residents accessing any or all of Merrick Community Services five program areas. The program also provides employment preparation and retention, in-depth assessment, job counseling, and wrap-around supports necessary to help participants remain engaged and retain employment that leads to self-sustaining wages.

*Website: merrickcs.org*

*Local contact: Daniel Rodriguez, 651-219-5533,* *drodriguez@merrickcs.org*

**Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council - Learn and Earn, $45,000**

This Learn and Earn program serves low income adults and young adults, allowing participants to earn wages while they learn skills necessary to obtain higher wages. The goal of this project is to advance the careers and wages of participants through offering them a continuum of integrated opportunities to obtain academic credit, college credit, industry recognized credentials, marketable skills, related on-the-job training and work experience, and employment in a high growth, high-demand occupation.

*Website: www.swmnpic.org*

*Local contact: Eriann Faris, 507-476-4053,* *efaris@swmnpic.org*

**Jeremiah Program - Removing Barriers, $45,000**

Jeremiah Program focuses on eliminating intergenerational poverty through education for two generations and holistic support for the whole family. Serving low-income single mothers and their children, the program provides access to stable housing and onsite early childhood education while the mothers receive training, individualized coaching, and earn a post-secondary degree. These supports allow single mothers to obtain the credentials they need to build and advance in a career with family-sustaining wage.

*Website: jeremiahprogram.org*

*Local contact: Patty Healy Janssen, 651-332-5003, pjanssen@jeremiahprogram.org*

**African Immigrants Community Services - Refugee Job Readiness & Employment Program, $45,000**

African Immigrants Community Services targets youth and adult East African refugees, serving hard to employ clients for placement in high demand positions that have on-the-job training or do not require proficient English skills or a degree. Programing includes direct job readiness services to participants, along with paid internships, bus passes, and tuition for enrollment in certificate or training programs.

*Website: www.aicsmn.org*

*Local contact: Mohamed Ahmed, 612-871-9481,* *m.ahmed@aicsmn.org*

**Karen Organization of Minnesota - What’s Next?, $45,000**

In collaboration with St. Paul and Roseville Public Schools, the Karen Organization of Minnesota address the unique academic challenges and career development needs facing youth and young adults from refugee and immigrant communities, many with limited English proficiency. Services provided include culturally responsive workforce training, financial literacy, employment preparation, and job skills with the goal that participants advance to training, postsecondary education, or obtain and retain stable employment.

*Website: https://www.mnkaren.org/programs/employment-services/youth-career-pathways/*

*Local contact: Alexis Walstad, 651-202-3120,* *awalstad@mnkaren.org* *or* *Eh Tah Khu, 651-202-3114,* *ekhu@mnkaren.org*

**Banyan Community - Youth Intervention and Educational Support, $42,200**

The Youth Intervention and Educational Support Focused on Creating a Pipeline of Diverse Employees serves low income high school and college students from the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis. Through wrap-around support programs, academic support, and job preparation, the program prepares youth for meaningful employment in high-growth, in-demand occupations.

*Website: www.banyancommunity.org*

*Local contact: Joani Essenburg, 612-722-8512,* *joani@banyancommunity.org*

**Greater Bemidji – MI2 Career Academies, $40,000**

The Minnesota Innovation Initiative (MI2) Career Academies project provides integrated economic development and workforce development services on a regional basis in Northwest Minnesota. Program participants are low income youth and adults with many experiencing multiple barriers to employment. The project goal is to introduce participants to technical skills and employment. Services include job training, employment preparation, job assistance, and training to gain certifications with a focus on manufacturing.

*Website: greaterbemidji.com*

*Local contact: David Hengel, 218-444-5757,* *dhengel@greaterbemidji.com*

**Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency – NEON (New Employment Opportunities Network), $40,000**

The NEON program is a comprehensive wrap-around service model that moves participants through a continuum of services resulting in employment. The program serves low income youth experiencing barriers to living-wage employment. Participants are provided case management, training opportunities to obtain an industry recognized certificate, on-the-job training opportunities, and job search and placement assistance.

*Website: www.aeoa.org*

*Local contact: Jan Francisco, 218-748-7332,* *jan.francisco@aeoa.org*

**Goodwill-Easter Seals - FATHER Project, $40,000**

Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota’s FATHER Project serves low-income fathers who face intergenerational poverty and employment disparities and are predominantly men of color. Program services include employment consulting designed to provide basic and occupational skill training and placement/retention services and support. These coordinated and individualized services positively impact economic and social outcomes, combat disparities, and strengthen family relationships.

*Website: https://www.goodwilleasterseals.org/services/supporting-youth-families/father*

*Local contact: Andrew Freeberg, 651-379-5874,* *afreeberg@gesmn.org*

**Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services - Support Services, $40,000**

The Support Services project will reduce disparities for people of color through employment preparation, paid internships, career training, financial literacy education, and entrepreneurship-supporting activities. The program will serve low-income youth and adults, including those with disabilities or those parenting children with disabilities. Through the program, participants will gain skills necessary for career success with a focus on credentialed employment in industries such as health care, manufacturing, and transportation.

*Website: www.cmjts.org*

*Local contact: Barbara Chaffee, 763-271-3711,* *bchaffee@cmjts.org*

## Program Activities

The Support Services Opportunity Grant provides grantees with the flexibility to provide a variety of programming opportunities. The definitions are broad, and the following information provides example activities that align with each category:

 **Job Training** – Activities that support participants in receiving industry-recognized credentials, industry -

specific certifications, and other career and job specific training.

**Employment Preparation** – Activities including resume writing, job searching, labor market information,

soft skills training, job shadowing, business tours, etc.

**Internships** – Paid experiences in which participants can apply technical and soft skills.

**Job Assistance to Fathers** – Activities such as employment consulting and skill training, specifically targeted to fathers.

**Financial Literacy** – Trainings, workshops, and curriculum in which participants learn about financial literacy concepts.

**Academic and Behavioral Interventions for Low Performing Students** – Activities that support youth from dropping out of school including earning academic credit, literacy and numeracy skills development, and tutoring.

**Youth Intervention Activities** – Activities that support youth and can include wrap around services such as case management and mentoring.

The chart below denotes the activities that each organization is providing through the SFY 2020-2021 Youth Support Services Opportunity Grant.

| **Project** | **Job Training** | **Employment Preparation** | **Internship** | **Job Assistance to Fathers** | **Financial Literacy** | **Academic and Behavioral Interventions for Low Performing Students** | **Youth Intervention Activities** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Minnesota Valley Action Council/South Central | x | x | x |   |   |   |   |
| Brooklyn Park EDA/BrookLynk |   | x | x |   |   |   |   |
| Career Solutions - Stearns/Benton | x | x |   |   | x |   |   |
| YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities | x | x | x |   | x |   |   |
| Project Legacy |   | x |   |   |   | x | x |
| Workforce Development Inc | x | x |   |   | x |   | x |
| Model Cities of St. Paul | x | x | x |   | x |   |   |
| Merrick Community Services | x | x |   |   |   |   |   |
| Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council | x | x |   |   |   |   |   |
| Jeremiah Program | x | x |   |   | x |   |   |
| African Immigrants Community Services | x | x | x |   | x |   |   |
| Karen Organization of Minnesota |   | x |   |   | x | x | x |
| Banyan Community |   | x |   |   |   | x | x |
| Greater Bemidji | x | x | x |   |   |  x |  x |
| Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency  | x | x |   |   | x |   |   |
| Goodwill-Easter Seals | x | x |   | x | x |   |   |
| Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services | x | x | x |   | x |   |   |
| TOTAL | 13 | 17 | 7 | 1 | 10 | 4 | 5 |

## Program Data

The SFY 2021 Youth Support Service demographic, activity, and outcome data that is included in this report reflects the cumulative totals of all 17 SFY 2021 Youth Support Service grantees through December 31, 2021. Eight grants were extended to December 31, 2021, and one grant was extended to March 31, 2022, due to programing impacts and interruptions from COVID.

|  |
| --- |
| **SFY 2021 Youth Support Services - Demographic, Activity, and Outcome Data** |
| Total Individual Participants Served  | 797 |
| Total Individuals served in Group Services | 2,229 |
| **Demographic Data** | **Total** | **Percentage** |
| **Gender** | Female | 464 | 58.2% |
| Male | 333 | 41.8% |
| **Age** |  14 – 15 | 81 | 10.2% |
|  16 – 17 | 168 | 21.1% |
|  18 | 105 | 13.2% |
|  19 – 21 | 170 | 21.3% |
|  22 – 24 | 95 | 11.9% |
|  Greater than 24 | 178 | 22.3% |
| **Ethnicity** | Hispanic/Latino | 140 | 17.6% |
| **Race** | American Indian or Alaska Native | 38 | 4.8% |
|  Asian/Pacific Islander | 91 | 11.4% |
| Black or African American | 341 | 42.8% |
| White | 169 | 21.2% |
| Multiracial | 5 | 0.6% |
| Not disclosed | 13 | 1.6% |
| **Education Level** |  12th Grade, or less | 354 | 44.4% |
| High School graduate or equivalent | 164 | 20.6% |
| Post-Secondary Education | 266 | 33.4% |
| **Other Demographics****Other Demographics** | Basic Skills Deficient | 101 | 12.7% |
| High School Drop-Out | 25 | 3.1% |
| Economically Disadvantaged Individual | 493 | 61.9% |
|  Participants with a Disability | 121 | 15.2% |
|  Limited English Proficient | 85 | 10.7% |
|  Pregnant or Parenting | 144 | 18.1% |
|  Youth or Adult Offender | 78 | 9.8% |
|  Homeless Individual | 60 | 7.5% |
|  Runaway Youth | 56 | 7.0% |
|  Foster Youth | 19 | 2.4% |
|  Veteran | 4 | 0.5% |
|  Participant/Family Receiving Public Assistance | 401 | 50.3% |
| **Program Services and Activities Data** | **Total** | **Percentage** |
| Received Education, Employment Preparation, or Work Readiness/Job Training Activities | 752 | 94.4% |
| Received Work Experience, Internship, or Apprenticeship Activities | 239 | 30.0% |
| Received Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities | 384 | 48.2% |
| Received Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities | 612 | 76.8% |
| Received Mentoring Activities | 512 | 64.2% |
| Received Support Services | 494 | 62.0% |
| Received Financial Literacy Education | 433 | 54.3% |
| Low-performing Students that Received Academic and Behavioral Interventions (Includes Study Skills, Tutoring, and Alternative School Services) | 94 | 11.8% |
| Youth that Received Intervention Activities | 69 | 8.7% |
| **Performance and Outcome Data** | **Total** | **Percentage** |
| Attained Work Readiness Goals | 551 | 69.1% |
| Attained Education Goals | 258 | 32.4% |
| Received Academic Credit or Service-Learning Credit | 198 | 24.8% |
| Obtained High School Diploma, GED, Remained in School, Obtained a Certificate or Degree, or Dropout - Returned to School | 365 | 45.8% |
| Entered Post-Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, Apprenticeship, or Military | 161 | 20.2% |
| Entered employment | 91 | 11.4% |
| Retained employment, increased wages or advanced career | 96 | 12.0% |
| **Participant Satisfaction Data** | **Total** | **Percentage (of responses)** |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Excellent” | 103 | 45.2% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Very Good” | 102 | 44.7% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Average” | 21 | 9.2% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Below Average” | 1 | 0.4% |
| Number of participants rating experience as “Poor” | 1 | 0.4% |
| Total Number of Surveys Completed | 228 | 100.0% |

## Expenditures

Contracts for the SFY 2021 Youth Support Services Grants all began July 1, 2020. Expenditures through February 28, 2022, are in the following table. Eight grantees extended their SFY 2021 contract through December 31, 2021, and one extended through March 31, 2022.

| Entity | SFY 2021 Allocation | SFY 2021 Expenditures | Percent of SFY 2021 Allocation Expended |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DEED Administration | $40,000.00 | $40,000.00 | 100% |
| Subgrantees (Youth) | $742,200.00 | $730,266.49 | 98.4% |
| Total | $782,200.00 | $ $770,266.49 | 98.5% |

## Success Stories

#### Community Coach - Model Cities

In June of 2021, a youth participant of the Community Coaching program had a major mental health situation a few weeks after enrolling. His family contacted his Community Coach right away for help. While the youth was in the hospital and upon his return home, the coach continued to check-in and offer support to the family and their son. He also met with adults important in the youth’s life in order to discuss next steps to continue mental health services, support, and help the youth with his goal to explore careers and get a job. During a coaching session at a local coffee shop, the coach suggested the youth work at a coffee shop since he loves coffee so much. The youth had never even thought about this possibility and was interested in the idea. Through the Community Coaching program this young man is receiving valuable support, guidance, and is given the space to explore what goals he would like to accomplish

#### Dad - Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota

A non-custodial Dad in his early 20’s enrolled in The FATHER Project when the mother of his child refused to allow him to participate in the birthing experience of his child or to see his daughter afterward. He began attending FATHER Project parenting groups, connected with other Dads with similar challenges, and received the case management, support, and information he needed to move forward. Since becoming an active FATHER Project participant, the Dad has been able to see his child, improve communication with his daughter’s mother, and learn valuable parenting skills. He plans to pursue a four-year college degree starting in the Fall of 2021.

#### Tommy – BrookLynk

With the help of BrookLynk, Tommy was placed in the Finance Department at Brooklyn Park City Hall as a high school intern for the summer. He loved his experience at the City of Brooklyn Park. “My goal during this internship was to gain knowledge of administrative tasks like data entry, note-taking, editing property information and public services, create an impact on my community, and to learn about property values and our local government. This internship opportunity exceeded my expectations, and my goals were met. The internship greatly increased my interest in working in government or becoming a property assessor one day. At last, a thank you shout out to BrookLynk and the City of Brooklyn Park for an awesome internship opportunity.”

#### Fadumo – Merrick Community Services

As a long-time participant of Merrick, Fadumo has been in and out work. Merrick has helped Fadumo explore several career fields, such as a Certified Nurse’s Assistant, Direct Care Professional and working with children. When Fadumo expressed interest in working at Math and Science Academy as a teacher’s aide, Merrick helped her refine her resume and Indeed account to apply for the position. A few weeks later, she got the call for an interview and was hired on the same day. Fadumo is very thankful for the opportunities Merrick has offered her and their continued support through retention services. Now Fadumo is employed as a teacher’s aide earning $17.00 per hour.